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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8581
INFO RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA 2908
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 3439
RUEHLGB/AMEMBASSY KIGALI 1364
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 1301
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 0064
RUEHIC/OIC COLLECTIVE
RUEHDS/USMISSION USAU ADDIS ABABA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DAR ES SALAAM 000372

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E JLIDDLE; INR/RAA FOR FEHRENREICH, AF/EPS, IIP/AF
CBERGIN, AF/PD KTHOMAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KIRF](#) [KISL](#) [KDEM](#) [KPAO](#) [TZ](#)

SUBJECT: TANZANIAN MUSLIMS POSITIVE, BUT AWAITING ACTION FOLLOWING
CAIRO SPEECH

11. SUMMARY: President Obama's Cairo speech to the Muslim world received positive feedback in Tanzania, but Muslims say they are now "waiting for action." Opinion leaders thought the speech "marks the beginning of new relations with the Muslim world" but were reserved awaiting follow-on actions. The youth audience was positive about path ahead. The speech was aired live on five national television stations and dozens of radio stations, and coverage continued on all evening news and in nine national newspapers June 5. PAS and Front office held a press conference prior to the speech, and a real-time viewing with 40 Muslim high school students at the embassy, and PAO was a guest on a call in response show with Television Zanzibar and conducted follow-up programs at the American Corner - Unguja and a Zanzibar Teacher's College. END SUMMARY.

PRINT REACTION POSITIVE BUT MEASURED

12. The June 5, "Mwananchi" (independent, 40,000 daily circulation, Kiswahili) reported: "Some Muslim leaders said President Obama does not have anything new to tell them - all that Muslims need to see is change in the U.S. policy." The influential Secretary General of Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA) Ramadhan Sanze reportedly said, "We are not taking seriously Obama's word but the Americans' policy/attitude towards Muslims worldwide." Mwananchi's sister paper "The Citizen" (independent, 30,000 daily circulation) carried a June 5 front page lead entitled "Obama gets support on U.S.-Muslim ties" and quoted several prominent opinion leaders support for the President, while also noting criticism for the lack of a direct apology in the speech, and some skepticism on whether the President will be able to implement the ideas stated in the speech. Influential Dar es Salaam Catholic Archdiocese Auxiliary Bishop Methodius Kilaini reportedly praised the speech saying it "heralded a new beginning that brought hope, especially between the conflicting groups." The Bishop praised Obama's support of diplomatic solutions while criticizing former president G.W. Bush, who "always used force and military might to solve problems." The respected Professor Mwesiga Baregu of the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) was quoted as saying, "I believe his speech marks the beginning of good relations between Muslims and Americans and the end of the Middle East crisis." However, the professor, a frequent critic of U.S. policy, continued, "Mr. Obama may not be able to implement what he desires because of the system that he had inherited." USDM political scientist, Bashiru Ally reportedly stated "Mr. Obama's failure to apologize for mistakes committed by his predecessors had weakened his case for a new chapter in relations between the US and the Muslim world. The academic also criticized the invasion of Iraq saying that the "illegal" invasion called for an apology and blamed the Middle East conflict on imperialism. Ally's attitude was described as 'wait and see;' he continued, "I hope he will have the commitment and be strong enough to implement what he has promised... let's give him time and see the results."

¶3. "The African" (moderate, independent 5,000 daily circulation) pronounced "U.S. wants fresh start with Muslim world" on the front page below the fold. The article used direct quotes to recap the speech in a positive light. "The Daily News" (Government owned, conservative, 30,000 daily broadsheet), carried the front page story "Obama pledges 'new beginning' with Muslims." The article suggested the speech may be one of the "defining moments of his presidency" and that it "laid out a new blueprint for U.S.-Middle East policy, promising to end mistrust, forge a state for Palestinians, and defuse a nuclear showdown with Iran." The article highlighted that Obama quoted from both the Koran and the Bible which pleased the audience. The article also linked the President's comments on "ignorant rants by those who deny the Nazi Holocaust" with President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

MUSLIM YOUTH "TRUST" THE PRESIDENT;" SAY "WE HAVE TO FORGET THE PAST"

¶4. Approximately 40 students and teachers from Dar es Salaam's Kinondoni Muslim Secondary School gathered at the Embassy to watch Obama's speech aired on VOA. The students smiled or applauded when the President mentioned banning torture, closing Guantanamo, educating women, and increasing funding for exchange programs. In the subsequent Q&A with Public Diplomacy Officer, the 16-18 year students reacted by saying:

- "We are all equal. We have to forget the past. Since the inauguration, President Obama has made some of America's former enemies into his best friends." (Male student)

- "If he truly says it from his heart, then it is very good. I trust him... but many other Muslims will not trust him because he is the president of the USA." (Female student)

"In the end it is up to the Israelis and Palestinians to take

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responsibility for bringing about peace themselves." (Male student)

- One student remarked positively that America supports the right of Muslim women to wear the hijab.

- Another student questioned whether or not the United States "secret" support of "Jews" (i.e. Israel) would prolong conflict in the region.

- "I think he's going to conquer the hearts of Muslims, because he used the words of the Koran, and that is what we believe. He'll win their hearts like he's won mine." (Female teacher, students agreed and applauded)

- "He was neutral 100% and very careful. And he must be careful, because people will examine every word he says." (Male teacher)

The students received a copy of the IIP publication "Being Muslim in America," a copy of the speech, articles from America.gov, and discussed the "Muslim Life in America" IIP poster show. The students smiled proudly and applauded when they learned that they were among the first Tanzanians to receive the text of the speech.

EVENTS HELD BY USG OFFICIALS:

¶5. - Charge and PAO conducted press conference morning of June 4th with three national television stations (ITV, Ch. 10 and Star TV) and print media (Kiswahili and English print). Sound bites, photos, and quotes were used in June 4 evening news and subsequent print press; Coverage was mostly factual.

- PAO traveled to Zanzibar for a one-hour live call-in program immediately following the President's speech. TV Zanzibar's Managing Director compared today's speech to MLK's "I Have a Dream" speech, calling it an impressive example of oratory. One caller was appreciative of the President's references to the Koran; others wanted to learn more about Muslim Americans (including in the U.S. Congress);

- PAO hosted discussions about the speech at the American Corner located at the State University of Zanzibar and Chukwani Teachers College (expected audience of 300, including two nearby secondary schools) on June 5, Reaction was mostly positive but now the audience is "waiting for action";

- PAS hosted 40 students from a Dar es Salaam Muslim Secondary School to view the speech live via VOA at the U.S. Embassy, reaction was overwhelming positive (pp 4);

- Post has further outreach planned to three Muslim secondary schools the week of June 8

RADIO/TV/ COVERAGE

¶6. Radio: The speech was carried live, nationally on Radio Free Africa (VOA affiliate), Radio Adhana (CNN International) coverage throughout the mostly-Muslim Swahili coast (400,000 listeners); this station primarily plays Muslim traditional music and received some calls about the English speech, on Zenz FM, Coconut FM (VOA affiliate) and on numerous other radio stations. Tanzanians were able to listen to the speech on their cell phones via local radio transmissions.

Television: The speech was carried live on Star TV (VOA affiliate) with national coverage, on ITV (CNN International) with national coverage, on TV Zanzibar (CNN International) coverage throughout the mostly-Muslim Swahili coast and commercial capital Dar es Salaam (300,000 viewers). Satellite dish owners viewed the speech on BBC, CNN, SkyNews and Al Jazeera English. All national media (Channel 10, TBC, and Star TV, and ITV, TVZ), carried the story on their evening news.

New Media: Post placed the speech announcement on Jamiiforums, Tanzania's leading internet blog in Tanzania:

<http://www.jamiiforums.com/international-forum/30480-president-obamas-trip-mideast-new-partnership.html>.

Immediately prior to the speech, the page had 300+ views with 25 comments (2 in Kiswahili, including: "Osama already said Obama has nothing different from ex-President Bush, he wants Obama to stick on his statements so that Middle East will start increasing their trust over him (Obama). He wants Obama to score more points over their doubts by withdrawing US' bias towards the Israel vs. Palestine saga. Let's wait and see. Time will eventually tell.")

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